

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION AND MINISTERIAL RELIEF.

(Abstract of Executive Committee's report to be presented to the General Assembly.)

Your committee in submitting this report of the work of Christian Education and Ministerial Relief records its deep sense of gratitude for the favor of God and of His Church. The year just closed has, in many respects, been the best in the history of this work. We thank God and take courage.

We are convinced that the Church is now fully awake to the responsibilities of raising up, training and equipping a suitable force of ministers and missionaries called by the Spirit of God in answer to the united prayers of His Church; of maintaining schools, colleges and theological seminaries of approved standards with high Christian ideals, and with the deep controlling purpose of furnishing the spiritual leadership so greatly needed in the Church and in the world; and of providing more adequately for the needs of the servants of the Church who, on account of sickness or old age, have been forced to retire both from labor and from income, and for the needy widows and orphans of those who have shared the privations of ministers and missionaries who have been called into glory.

No more fundamental work has been given to the Church of God than that which has been entrusted to this Executive Committee. It lies at the very root of the endeavors of the Church, and, to a large extent, conditions the success of all the activities of the kingdom, and the blessing of God upon His Church.

Financial Statement.
The receipts for all departments from April 1, 1916, to March 31, 1917, amounted to \$285,465.57, as against \$117,602.50 the previous year, an increase of \$167,862.07. The sum of \$193,891.62 was added to the Endowment Fund of Ministerial Relief and \$91,573.95 to the other departments.

The following exhibit shows the sources of these funds and furnishes a comparison with the receipts of last year:

	Fund.	1915-16	1916-17	1915-16	1916-17
Other Departments.					
Churches	\$ 3,423.53	\$56,754.97	\$58,662.95		
Sabbath schools	540.37	2,093.59	3,522.28		
Societies	2,562.86	6,570.82	7,321.93		
Individuals	13,233.55	5,018.33	5,237.55		
Legacies	384.59	531.36	563.74		
Miscellaneous	1,167.50	733.69	890.96		
Interest		18,850.94	18,144.94		
Rent		424.75	93.50		
Refunds		709.69	1,012.25		
Total		\$21,312.40	\$91,573.95		\$96,291.10
Endowment					
Churches	\$ 62,931.95				
Sabbath schools	10,386.37				
Societies	14,316.03				
Individuals	100,516.74				
Legacies	3,659.98				
Miscellaneous	2,080.55				
Total		\$193,891.62			

The Campaign on Stewardship.

A more energetic campaign on Stewardship has been waged this year through the efficient secretary, Rev. R. L. Walkup, from his headquarters in Jackson, Miss. Evidence is increasing on every hand that the work of this committee is bringing larger immediate results and preparing for greater things in the future. We believe the General Assembly should most heartily commend to pastors, sessions, Presbyteries and Synods this work of such fundamental importance.

Woman's Auxiliary.

The Executive Secretary has attended each meeting of the Supervisory Committee of the Woman's Auxiliary. The blessing of God has rested upon the labors of the women and their report this year will doubtless show better results than in any previous year.

Mrs. W. C. Winsborough, the efficient superintendent, has conducted her work judiciously and economically and we desire to record our sincere appreciation of her services and of the vast army of women associated with her.

Vocational Exercises.

Instead of preparing special vocational exercises for use in the Sunday-schools during the month of December arrangements were made with the publishers of "The White Gifts for the King" service for use in the Sunday-schools last year. Where prayerful preparation was made, the use of this service resulted in a wonderful blessing to the youth and to the Church.

The reports in our office show that 164 dedicated their lives to Christ on that date, while 1,133 renewed their consecration to the Master. Two thousand five hundred and one men, women, boys and girls made an offering of their services for the work of the Church, the Sunday-school, Young People's Society and the other organizations of the Church. In all, \$7,529.17 was brought as an offering to the Saviour, for Education and Ministerial Relief and other causes. In addition to this, large quantities of provisions, clothing and flowers were brought to be distributed among the sick and poor.

I. Education for the Ministry.

The seed that has been so faithfully sown during the past twelve years is now yielding blessed harvests.

Hundreds of thousands of pages of literature have been sent out from this office to the boys and girls of our Church calling their attention to the claims of Christ for their love and service.

The literature which we have prepared is unsurpassed. It has been most cordially commended by the leaders of other churches and by the principal educators of our own and other lands. We have supplied many of the principal denominations of the United States with supplies for their use.

We are especially blessed in having in our own communion a young woman, the daughter of one of the foreign missionaries of our Church, who, as modest as she is gifted, writes under the nom de plume, "Mildred Welch." We have three series of leaflets written by her, each containing from six to eight brief stories: "A Pocket Full of Gems," "The Boy Scout" series and "The Voices of Girlhood" series. She is now preparing another series which we hope to issue in the near future.

College Visitation.

The Executive Committee has arranged for the visitation of a large number of colleges during the year for the presentation of the call to the ministry and mission service. We are now planning to unite with other denominations and the Young Men's and Young Woman's Christian Associations in a systematic visitation of all of the colleges and State universities of the land. It is hoped to have conducted in each of these institutions evangelistic campaigns and to have presented in a clear, Scriptural manner the principles that should guide our boys and girls in discovering God's plan for their lives.

Candidates for the Ministry.

Since 1869 the proportion of candidates for the ministry to the membership of the Church has been an average each year of one candidate to 609 members. This has varied from one candidate to 441 members (in 1893) to one candidate to 846 members (in 1881). The reports of the Presbyteries to the General Assembly in 1916 show one candidate to 712 members.

Loans to Candidates.

Applications from the Presbyteries for loans from the Funds of Education for the Ministry for Candidates for the ministry and mission service to the number of 306 have been received by the Executive Committee. The sum of \$30,740 has been remitted to them. Of the 306 who were aided, 289 are candidates for the ministry, 3 are candidates for medical mission service and 14 are young women studying for special mission service. Of those aided 152 were in theological seminaries, 135 in colleges, 2 in medical schools and 17 in training schools.

II. Ministerial Relief.

We are delighted to report that during the year there has been remitted from our office to the beneficiaries of the funds of Ministerial Relief \$52,773.86. This is the largest amount that has ever been paid the faithful servants of Christ in any year in the history of the Church—an increase of \$5,056.36 over the amount remitted last year.

The Roll.

We have had on the rolls of Ministerial Relief during the year 80 ministers, 158 widows and 25 orphans. In

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these 263 homes are 81 children under 14 years of age. The 80 ministers have reached the average age of 72 years. The oldest beneficiary is 91 years of age and has labored in the service of our own Church 64 years. The youngest minister enrolled is 30 years of age and is now an invalid.

Of the 158 widows on the rolls of Ministerial Relief the average age is about 64 and their husbands spent in the service of our Church an average of 28 years.

Average Assistance Provided.

The average assistance rendered the 35 ministers on the Honorably Retired Roll is \$296.64.

The average amount paid the 45 other ministers is \$290.44.

The average amount sent to each of the 80 ministers is \$294.03.

The average amount forwarded to each home of the 158 widows is \$169.25.

The average amount furnished each of the 25 orphans is \$100.40.

The average assistance to each of the 263 families on the roll is \$200.66 per annum, or fifty-five cents a day per family.

The Honor Roll on High.

During the year three ministers, nine widows and two orphans were called to the General Assembly of the Saints.

We are earnestly praying and working for the day when we can place our aged ministers on the rolls before they finally are forced to lay down all work and go to beds of weakness and pain. The death rate doubtless will then be lowered and the strength of these seasoned veterans and their rich experience may be utilized in work of far reaching importance that will not overtax their physical endurance.

III. The Endowment Fund of Ministerial Relief.

The total amount of the Endowment Fund of Ministerial Relief is now \$543,651.53. This is the total amount of the bonds and real estate notes listed at cost price. Twelve years ago we entered all our securities at par value. Last year we decided for several reasons to carry all securities at cost. This caused a reduction on our books of \$7,779.37.

The offer of a liberal elder of the Church to add \$68,000 to the Endowment Fund, if the whole Church during the year 1916 contribute twice that amount, was happily met, to the praise of God and for the more honorable relief of the faithful veterans of our Church.

The idea and plan of this liberal elder, which resulted in his making this handsome gift of \$68,000 in such a manner as inspired other members of the Southern Presbyterian Church to add \$139,736.76 within the limit set by him, and large additions later, was inspired by the Spirit of God. It has given added emphasis to the sacred but neglected cause of Ministerial Relief.

The General Assembly has urged that this fund be made one million dollars as soon as possible. We are planning to stress this fund during the year upon which we have now entered.

The Protestant Episcopal Church

has just completed the raising of a similar fund of \$6,000,000. The Presbyterian Church (U. S. A.) is seeking a fund of \$10,000,000; the Congregational Church of \$5,000,000; the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) of \$15,000,000, and some of the Lutheran Synods \$1,000,000.

IV. The Assembly's Home and School.

In obedience to the instructions of the General Assembly, the Executive Committee, on the 23d day of July 1915, conveyed to "Robert Campbell Gilmore, George H. Channing and J. E. Timberlake, trustees for the Board of Directors and Managers of the Female Orphan Asylum of Fredericksburg, Virginia, which trustees were appointed by the Corporation Court of the city of Fredericksburg, Virginia, on June 29, 1915, at the request of the remaining members of said Board of Directors and Managers, which request was endorsed by the Session of the Presbyterian church at Fredericksburg, Virginia," the building and grounds known as "Smithsonian," formerly the Female Orphans' Asylum of Fredericksburg, which was transferred to the Church when the Assembly's Home and School were erected in Fredericksburg.

We have sold all of the remaining property with the exception of one building and lot, formerly used as a dormitory, have paid all the debts of the institution and will remit to the trustees mentioned above, \$5,300 in first mortgage notes and \$907.74 in cash, making a total of \$6,207.74. We are holding the dormitory property for \$6,500. In case a sale can be

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